Educational Psychology

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As a teacher, you need to be aware that peer-to-peer relationships affect student behavior and student learning in the classroom. Peer-to-peer relationships make up a huge part of a student’s life and as an educator you need to be aware of the importance of these relationships. When looking at peer pressure, a student may feel forced to fit into a certain crowd. In this case, a student may try to push off his or her intelligence to fit in with the group. This will affect their classroom behavior negatively and may hinder them in school.

With peer pressure there is both positive and negative effects. Many peers encourage such desirable qualities that are brought out by truthfulness, fairness, compassion, cooperation, and abstinence to drugs and alcohol. These traits would be regarded as positive effects from peer pressure. Negative effects of peer pressure would be encouraging aggression, criminal activity, and other dangerous social behaviors. Educators of all ages need to be aware of cliques and understand that certain people will get along more than others. As an educator a good way to help cope with this is to divide the cliques into different groups or crowds allowing for different individuals to branch out. A crowd consists of a large, loose knit social group that shares certain common interests and attitudes. An example of a crowd could be athletes or ‘jocks’ but these individuals will often times then fit into different cliques. Teachers need to be aware that there are often times groups that will resists the ways of the dominant culture and adopt their own norms for behavior. An example of this would be a group of individuals who wears animal tales just so they can fight the norm and try to resist rules. Kids who develop these subculture behaviors often become rebels. An educator, needs to be aware of gangs or social groups characterized by initiation rites, distinctive colors or symbols, territorial orientation, and feuds with rival groups. This will help not only protect you as an individual but also have a positive impact on the school’s community as a whole. A teacher needs to be aware of the students who are considered popular amongst their classmates. As a teacher, it is vital to allow these students to act as leaders or mentors to other students varying in personality, cliques, and crowds. By increasing the diversity upon who works with who this will allow for all students to become engaged. Rejected students are often defined as being an undesirable social partner. These are the students that the classmates see as being the least desirable to work with in all aspects. As an educator, it is important to increase the awareness of all the students and by dividing students into groups a choice of yours rather than a student’s choice. A controversial student is a student whom some peers strongly like and other peers strongly dislike. As a teacher you have to be aware of various activities related to bullying, favoritism, and both the positive and negative effects of these things. A teacher needs to understand the ins and outs of a neglected student. A neglected student is a student whom most peers have no strong feelings for. These feelings are nonexistent, (nether positive or negative.) Ways to combat this is to allow for equal opinions to come from everyone in the room. It is also important to get students to participate in your classroom and feel comfortable doing so.